



**S.F.V.B.S.**

**SAN FERNANDO VALLEY BROMELIAD SOCIETY**

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## JANUARY 2015 NEWSLETTER

### OFFICERS

Pres & News: **Mike Wisnev** V.P.: **Mary K. Carroll** Secretary: \_\_\_\_\_ Treasurer: **Mary Chan**

Membership: **Kathleen Misko** Health & Wellness: **Georgia Roiz** Web Page: **Kim Thorpe**

Directors: **Steve Ball, Bryan Chan, Richard Kaz -fp, Dave Bassani-fp**

next meeting: **Saturday Jan. 3, 2015 @ 10:00 am**  
**Sepulveda Garden Center 16633 Magnolia Blvd. Encino, California 91316**

### AGENDA

**9:30 – SET UP & SOCIALIZE**

**10:00 - Door Prize – for members who arrive before 10:00**

**10:05 - Welcome Visitors and New Members.**  
Make announcements

**Coffee / Refreshments with Rose Prunners**

**10:30 - Introduce Speaker**

**Birute A. Vileisis Ph.D.** will present a program on the “Selby Botanic Gardens” (Sarasota, Florida) featuring Harry Luther's bromeliads.



Dr. Vileisis is president of the Malibu Orchid Society and has traveled around the world for this hobby. When she moved to southern California she chose to live in Malibu in order to have space for her gardening. Her appreciation of nature and the area where she lives is featured in the book “**Pacific High**” by **Tim Palmer**; a book about *Adventures In The Coast Ranges From Baja To Alaska*. (just google her name.)

Birute is trained as an art historian; plants are a hobby she loves. She has a bachelor's degree in English literature from the University of Vermont,

studied fine arts in Italy and has a Ph.D. from Princeton Uni. in the history of art. In 2010 she retired as Associate Academic VP from Loyola Marymount University after 20 years of service.

Dr. Vileisis is a very busy person and active member of Our Lady of Malibu Church. Soon after retirement she began work producing the film “*Radical Kindness: The Life of John Sheridan.*” 94 year old, Monsignor John V. Sheridan, a former pastor emeritus at OLM Church who grew to become a local religious icon, died after being hit by a car in 2010. The film, narrated by Martin Sheen, premiered July 2014 in Calabasas.

**You don't want to miss this speaker!<>**

**11:30 - Refreshment Break and Show and Tell:**

Will the following members please provide refreshments this month: **Mohammed, Brenda Kanno, Mardy Graves, Adrienne Jaffe, Richard Kaz, Leni Koska, Barry Landau, and anyone else who has a snack they would like to share. Feed The Kitty**

**11:45 - For Show and Tell is our educational part of the meeting – please bring one plant.**

**11:55 – Mini Auction:** members contribute

**12:05 – Raffle:** We need each member to donate

**12:15 - Pick Up around your area**

**12:30 –/ Meeting is over—Drive Safely <>**

***Mary K is taking a look back at December.....***Our president was missing but we elected him again for 2015; Mike, welcome back and thanks for accepting. Barry Landau has volunteered to update our facebook page. Between Kim, Mike and Mary we will get the web page updated ASAP. Several members were not able to attend for various reasons but all in all we had good attendance. Our brunch was simply fabulous; we have some great cooks. There are several dishes I would love to mention that were particularly good but I would take the chance on offending someone else. Well I do have to mention the great turkey; thanks Bryan Chan. Although several women helped in the kitchen with the food, we were just a little slow getting it all out. By the time we were ready to serve, the members were circling the table ready to pounce. Bryan also had a great selection of gift plants for the 2014 members. <>

### ***Announcement***

- **Welcome new members** Andrea Wareham, Cheryl Murphy, Dana Groina, Carole Scott
- **Happy Birthday** to James Johnson - **Jan. 8**, Phyllis Frieze **Jan 11**, Leni Koska - **Jan. 26**
- **Participation Rewards System** - This is a reminder that you will be rewarded for participation. Bring a Show-N- Tell plant, raffle plants, and Refreshments and you will be rewarded with a Raffle ticket for each category. We realize not everyone has pristine show plants but each of us certainly have unidentified plants that can be brought in.  
Each member, **please** bring one plant. <>
- **Membership Dues**

***TIME TO RENEW .....*** Most members have already paid. If you receive your monthly newsletter by snail mail, **please look at the number 14 or 15 on your envelope to the right of your name; that indicates whether you are paid up or not. If you receive your news by email we will be sending another email as a reminder. We don't want to lose you as a member so please mail the payment immediately or pay at the meeting to: Membership Chair – Kathleen Misko or Treasurer - Mary Chan or Mail to: SFVBS membership P.O. Box 16561 - Encino, CA 91416-6561**  
**Yearly Membership Dues \$10.00** for a single or couple

- **Ramblings about Better Growing** The editor is looking for information from other members for this column. I'm sure some of you have some growing tips to share about what to do or what not to do; it can be 1 or 2 sentences or 3 or 4 paragraphs. Member contributions are vital to keep the newsletter interesting and our SFVBS thriving. <>

***Now Is The Time .....*** by: Stan Oleson, Jan 1985

***TO*** protect plants from frost by covering them with newspaper or old bed-sheets, but not with plastic sheeting. If it is going to be very cold, move the tender plants inside. Moving your plants up against the house is good for a few F.

***TO*** dump or not dump the water from the tank type Bromeliads? If there is a frost and the water in the tank is removed the tender meristem **may** suffer frost damage.

***Now Is The Time*** was written and first published by *Stan Oleson; and published again in the South Bay Bromeliad Associates Newsletter prepared by Bob Wright in January 2006* <>

## Please Put These Dates on Your Calendar

Saturday, February 7, 2015	SFVBS Regular meeting – STBA
Saturday, March 7, 2015	SFVBS Regular meeting - STBA
Saturday, April 4, 2015	SFVBS Regular meeting - STBA
Saturday, May 2, 2015	SFVBS meeting / possible Field Trip
Sat & Sun – May 30 & 31	<b>SFVBS Bromeliad Show &amp; Sale w/ LACSS</b>
Saturday, June 6, 2015	Speaker : <i>Guillermo Rivera</i>
Saturday, July 4, 2015 <b>??</b>	SFVBS Regular meeting - STBA
Saturday, August 1, 2015	S SFVBS meeting / possible Field Trip
Saturday, Sept 5, 2015	SFVBS Regular meeting - STBA
Saturday, Oct 3, 2015	SFVBS Regular meeting - STBA
Saturday, Nov 7, 2015	SFVBS Regular meeting - STBA
Saturday, Dec 5, 2015	Holiday Meeting & Brunch 10:00 – 2:00

**Dates with ?? to be discussed at a later date**

**STBA = Speaker To Be Announced**

- **Speakers** Let us know if you have any ideas for Speakers about Bromeliads or any similar topics? We are always looking for an interesting speaker. If you hear of someone, please notify Mary K. at 818-705-4728 or e-mail [rango676@aol.com](mailto:rango676@aol.com) ◇

**Help us to improve our Membership**

**Tell people about your hobby !**

**Reach out to visitors and new members, make them feel welcomed !**

**Let us hear your ideas to improve membership.**

## Ask Yourself, How can I help my club?

1. First foremost we need **members to plan to attend all meetings**. What we ask is for people **to try not to plan anything else on our meeting day**. Look at our calendar above before you schedule your next event.
2. Participate by contributing your ideas; tell our president
3. You can **donate an occasional plant for the mini-auction or the raffle**. **You can also participate by buying raffle tickets or by bidding** on a plant in the auction.
4. Food and Drink – everyone is encouraged to bring in something for our great lunches, and feed the kitty if you don't. .
5. Newsletter – you might contribute a short (or better yet, long) article – a paragraph would be great. ◇

## *Broms in Bloom - Member Photos*

Do you have an unusual plant in bloom or you saw something you just think is special, if so send us a photo 2 weeks before the meeting.

Happy Holidays! from *Neoregelia* 'Barry Landau'



*Neoregelia* '**Barry Landau**' is a cross of *Neoregelia* 'Hannibal Lector; x *Neoregelia* 'Tossed Salad.' (Remember that the seed parent is always the first one listed in a cross.) It was named after Barry by Chayangsu S of Thailand. For more information of this plant or any registered Bromeliad cross, check out the Bromeliad Cultivar Register at <http://registry.bsi.org>. In addition to containing the above information, it says this Neo is a "Mature rosette to 50cms. diameter. Yellowish-green foliage, dark red / purple concentric bands, red leaf tips and prominent black spines. Named after a Californian grower and websites creator. Country of origin: **Thailand.**"



# Taxonomic Tidbits – *Vriesea* s.l. I – the Basics.

By Mike Wisnev, SFVBS President ([mwisnev@sbcglobal.net](mailto:mwisnev@sbcglobal.net))

San Fernando Valley Bromeliad Society Newsletter – January 2015

I have been reluctant to write about *Vrieseas* or *Neoregelias* and for much the same reasons. You don't see a lot of species of either. I don't think I have seen ten *Vriesea* species, though some of them are spectacular. In fact, one of the most well-known Bromeliads in the world is *V* 'Splendret', a cultivar of *V splendens*, shown below in flower at Live Art. Not too hard to see why it is popular.



Others that are great are *V fosteriana*, *gigantea*, *fenestralis* and *platynema*. Some of these are somewhat similar – until they flower. I'll show some pictures of them throughout the article.

There are lots of hybrids, In fact, one of the premier *Vriesea* hybridizers in the world, John Arden, lives down in Vista. Here are a few *Vrieseas* at John Arden's. For those of you new to the hobby, John told me he starting crossing them a year after he started collecting!



***Vriesea s.l.*** *Vriesea* are in the Tillandsioideae subfamily. All members of this family have entire margins, which means no spines! That alone should make them more popular with some folks. The contrary isn't always true – most Bromeliodeae have spines, but not all.

You may recall that *Vriesea* have been distinguished from *Tillandsia* primarily because they have small petal appendages, called ligules, while *Tillandsia* don't. Jason Grant proposed that the *Tillandsia*-looking *Vriesea* (that is the smaller xeric looking ones) be moved to *Tillandsia* despite their lack of ligules. He didn't address the *Tillandsias* that look more like traditional *Vriesea*.

Their inflorescences can vary quite a bit- dense or lax, simple or compound. The colors of the bracts can be stunning, or fairly dull. They typically have yellow or white flowers that are distichous. Often the inflorescence is a paddle, like that shown in the picture above of *V* 'Splendret.' Sometimes the flowers extend well past the bracts, and others they barely do, so you almost don't see them. Often the petals are not radially symmetric as two of them are closer together to each other than the third one.

Often the leaves are fairly plain green. A lot are purple to almost black, as you can see in the picture above. Some have green leaves with purplish tips. The more popular ones have all sorts



of stripes or bands, as you will see from the pictures. They are hybridized to combine these features, and to mix in the inflorescence. Cross a plain green one that has a stunning two colored paddle inflorescence with one that has beautiful leaves and a relatively simple inflorescence to try to combine the best features.

Hybridizing like that can be a long process. You grow lots of seeds, which means it can take a long time to see the results, and you may not get what you hoped for. Instead of getting a beautifully leaved plant with a stunning inflorescence, you might get a plain green one with a relatively simple inflorescence. So, serious commercial hybridizers (and hobbyists!) grow thousands of seeds, and end up tossing thousands of unsatisfactory results – or selling them to nurseries which results in huge numbers of unnamed hybrids. These hybridizers take the ones they like best and may backcross it with one of the parents to try to get more of the feature the hybrid is missing. They may then cross the best one with something else. This can take years.

Here is an unlabeled *Vriesea* that looks like *V fosteriana*. I got it after it bloomed, and there are now two nice size pups – the mother is gone. I'll have to wait to see the inflorescence to know if it is close to *V fosteriana*, or has a lot other mixed in with it. I will never "know" for sure, at least unless DNA testing gets more advanced like it is for finding out what breed your dog is. There are many hybrids like this that are slightly different. The green lines may be spaced more apart, or more squiggly. Some are more red. Others have larger white spaces between them. Ana and I seem to love all of them!



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*Vriesea* grow in western S America and eastern Brazil, with a couple of small slivers of land connecting these two ranges in south-central S America. They also grow throughout Central America and the Caribbean. Most are epiphytes. While they are easy to grow, they are harder to grow well. It can be a bit of a challenge to find the best place to grow them – they probably do best in indirect sunlight. I have burned some in direct sunlight, while others lose some of their coloring in too much shade.

Currently, there are about 260 species of *Vriesea*, and FCBS shows about 200 of them. In 1977, Smith and Downs listed 249. That's odd. Most of the time I find there are many more species in a genus now than 40 years ago. Not only is exploration continuing in many of these habitats, but often a poorly defined species is studied and split into a number of new ones. This is happening with some *Hechtia* species, and *Tillandsias*, like *T fasciculata*.

So why is *Vriesea* an exception? Just like some species are split into new ones, so are some genera. *Vriesea* is a prime example. In 1995 Jason Grant broke off two new genera – *Alcantarea* (about 30 species) and *Werauhia* (about 85 species). Grant, J.R., 1995. The resurrection of *Alcantarea* and *Werauhia*, a new genus. *Tropische und Subtropische Pflanzenwelt* 91, 7–57. So, if you count these, there are about 375 species of *Vriesea* – like I said, a lot more than in 1977. Apparently, these two new genera have not been completely accepted. Some still think these other two should be part of *Vriesea*, while others don't.

The title of this article – *Vriesea* s.l. – conveys this difference of opinion. “S.l.” is an abbreviation for a Latin phrase (*sensu lato*) that more or less means in the broad sense. In contrast, s.s. means in the strict sense. You will see these terms when the groupings are controversial and have either been broken up or combined. Since this is also controversial, just saying *Vriesea* doesn't tell you which is meant – the newer narrower group, or the older broader group. In the cacti world, you often see it for *Rebutia*, where other genera were combined with *Rebutia* s.s.

***Vriesea* subgenera and sections.** Smith & Downs broke *Vriesea* into two subgenera – subgen. *Vriesea* and subgen. *Alcantarea*. They were distinguished primarily in two ways. First, subgen. *Vriesea* has erect petals, while the other one droops after opening. (You may recall that *Tillandsia* subgen *Pseudoalcantarea* also was characterized by drooping petals.) The other difference relates to the appendage on their seeds – one has an appendage that is divided, while the other doesn't.

In addition, subgen *Vriesea* was further broken into two sections. I don't know if any other Bromeliad subgenera are broken into sections like this. Section *Xiphion* has included stamens and generally dull green or brown bracts, while section *Vriesea* has exerted stamens and generally brightly colored red, orange or yellow bracts.

Next month, or the one after, we'll continue with more about *Vriesea* s. l.